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INFO RUCNSOM/SOMALIA COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
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RHMFIS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 002406

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DEPT FOR AF/E AND A/S FRAZER  
DS for A/S Griffin, DSS Director Starr, and DS/IP/AF

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/08/2017

TAGS: PGOV PREL ASEC PTER SO ET

SUBJECT: Travel to Somalia

REF: Nairobi 1749

Classified by PolOff Mitch Benedict for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (SBU) Summary. This message lays out proposed plans for travel by USG personnel to Somalia during the next 6 months. End Summary.

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National Reconciliation Congress  
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¶2. (C) The Somalia National Reconciliation Congress (NRC) is expected to convene in Mogadishu on/about June 14 and will run for at least 30-45 days. The Congress will be of central importance to achieve national reconciliation, and to build stability and security. The U.S. is playing a major role to help bring about and support the Congress. This includes the U.S. role in promoting dialogue. It is, therefore, essential that the U.S. be present at the Congress. We propose to send two locally engaged staff of the Somalia Unit to help monitor proceedings throughout the duration of the meeting. In addition, we propose to send American officers (State and USAID), including Special Envoy Yates and possibly Ambassador Ranneberger, for periods ranging from 1-4 days at a time. Special Envoy Yates, accompanied by the two locally engaged staff, should be present for the opening of the Congress set for June 14. There may also be a need for Mission or USG-contracted personnel to be at the Congress for support purposes.

¶3. (C) Depending on developments at the Congress, it may be necessary for senior Washington-based personnel --specifically AF A/S Frazer -- to visit the Congress on 1-2 day missions.

¶4. (C) While the degree of success or failure of the Congress will in part influence the need for and frequency of future travel to Somalia, we envision a need for monthly visits to various locations in Somalia by both American officers (State and USAID) and locally engaged staff.

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Longer Term Travel  
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¶5. (C) In essence, travel to Somalia will have the following purposes:

- Engage with the Transitional Federal Institutions and non-government actors to encourage an inclusive national reconciliation process.
- Continue to press for an end to violence.
- Ensure unhindered distribution of urgently needed humanitarian assistance.
- Support provision of development and security assistance.

¶6. (C) Travel will be carried out in most cases by State/AID teams

ranging from 2-4 people. USAID/EA, USAID/FFP and USAID/OFDA, as well as our Refugee Coordinators, all need to perform such travel in order to carry out their responsibilities. In some cases, travel will be working-level, and in other cases led by Special Envoy Yates or Ambassador Ranneberger. Exact timing of any particular trip would be contingent on current security assessments, availability of interlocutors, and flight/travel logistics.

¶17. (C) Travel destinations would include (in addition to Mogadishu for the reconciliation congress): Baidoa, Bosasso, Hargeisa, Wajid, Garowe, Gedo/Dobley, and Beledweyne. Given the distances involved, travel to some locations -- Garowe Bossasso, Gedo/Dobley -- would require an overnight stay and/or staging out of Djibouti.

¶19. (C) Travel costs could be contained by using regularly-scheduled UN flights to Wajid, Garowe, Hargeisa, and Beledweyne. Gedo would be reached by road from Kenya. Depending on the availability of UN flights, some contract air could be required.

¶10. (C) All travel will require development of security plans and DS assistance.

RANNEBERGER